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Six deer killed Saturday; no incidents reported by authorities



JULIE JOCEAK/QMI AGENCY NAGARA

A sign placed by protesters while the deer hunt was on in Short Hills Conservation Area on Saturday urges an end to the hunts there. See story on page 2.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ SHORT HILLS

More hunters than expected enter Short Hills

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

About double the number of expected hunters trekked into Short Hills Provincial Park Saturday morning for the scheduled aboriginal deer hunt.

About 70 members of the Haudenosaunee community entered the park, roughly 60 of them hunters, for the bow and arrow-only hunt, allowed under treaty rights.

Initially, only 30 hunters had been anticipated Saturday. Twenty-nine entered the park Sunday.

"There were more hunters than we expected," said Paul Williams, a member of the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority who helped oversee the two-day event.

Many, however, left well before the evening deadline due to the rainy weather, he said.

Those who were on the property but were not hunting were there to cook, supervise, and in the case of teenagers in particular, to learn about the hunting tradition, Williams said.

Members of the Short Hills Wildlife Alliance, a group opposed to the hunt, took issue with the sudden increase in the number of people granted access to the park, which was otherwise closed to the public.

"The Ministry (of Natural Resources) is not sticking to its word," said area resident Robin Zavitz, one of about 40 protesters who stationed themselves at park entrances at various times throughout



JULIE JACSON/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

A sign warns the public that Short Hills Conservation Area is closed while the deer hunt was on in Short Hills Conservation Area on Saturday, November 22, 2014.

the weekend.

"We've got (60) hunters in a 1,600-acre park surrounded by 100 homes," she said, citing her concerns for public safety.

The MNR created a no-hunt zone between the park and private property lines, but Zavitz said the buffer zone was breached last year and a native hunter entered her property.

An investigation by the

MNR and Niagara Regional Police found no evidence of hunters trespassing on private property.

Despite the Wildlife Alliance requesting updated safety protocols from the ministry, as well as an updated map of the designated hunting area prior to the event getting underway, they were not received, Zavitz said.

The hunting zone set up

by the MNR runs 150 metres inside the park from the abutting property line.

As the aboriginal hunters know they are "under a microscope," extra care is taken to ensure the safety of all involved as well as the public, Williams said.

In the eight years the Haudenosaunee community has been hunting within park areas, "no one has been hurt and we want to continue that

record," he said.

"Safety is our primary concern."

To ensure no one entered the park without authorization, between 20 and 30 Ontario Parks staff members and conservation officers were stationed in and around Short Hills during the hunt, including at both official and known unofficial entrances, said Ontario Parks spokesman John Salo.

Niagara Regional Police and OPP were also on site to offer assistance.

Salo called it an overall "quiet" weekend, with no incidents to report from either hunters or protesters.

Over the next few days, staff will sit down to review the safety provisions in place and determine whether anything needs to change before the next hunt, Salo said.

Additional hunts will close the park to the public today and Friday, as well as Dec. 6 and 7.

Six deer were killed Saturday. A final count of the deer killed Sunday was not immediately available.

The deer will be used as part of Haudenosaunee mid-winter ceremonies that conclude the hunting season and will be shared among "hundreds of people," Williams said.

"Hunting really serves to connect a lot of the people with the natural world," he said. "The relationship between a hunter and deer is one in which the animal voluntarily gives itself so our families can eat."

Williams said the deer population in Short Hills is much higher than its ecosystem can sustain, with indigenous plant species being eaten and invasive plant species left behind to take over the park property.

"People say the park is a sanctuary. It is a natural zone, and we're trying to keep it in balance."

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **POLICING:** OPP officer injured in freak crash recovering one step at a time

The long road back

BILL SAWCHUK
QMI Agency Niagara

Michelle Tucker keeps a goose feather close to her heart.

It's a reminder of how blessed she is to have her husband, Pete, by her side.

The veteran OPP officer from the Niagara detachment was injured in a freak crash on Hwy. 400 north of Barrie June 25. He was hit on the head by a goose in flight, causing him to crash his motorcycle while travelling at about 130 km/h.

Tucker, who is from St. Catharines, was part of an OPP escort at the time with at least 14 other motorcycles involved in a training exercise.

He stopped breathing and lost his left leg at the scene. In hospital over the next couple of weeks, he was in a coma and his kidneys failed. He endured six surgeries in a 10-day period.

Michelle Tucker keeps that goose feather in a locker inscribed with the word Blessed.

"Pete was on a breathing tube and ventilator, and when they were scooping it they pulled goose feathers out of his lungs," she said.

"It happened more than once. They told me about it, and I asked if I could have one. They looked at me like I was nuts, but a day or two later they brought me one."

"It's just a reminder. It's not about the goose at all. It represents his strength and that he has been able to overcome this."

Pete Tucker acknowledges all this — and in the next breath, counts those blessings.

"I don't want to be dramatic or have anyone thinking I am a special guy," he said. "A lot of my strength and determination comes from my wife, Michelle. We have been together 22 years now and married for 18 of them. She is the greatest, strongest person I know, and I couldn't do it without her."

"I'm just a guy who survived an accident. I'm quite sure I could have died that day, but I made it because of faith and luck."

Tucker's luck started when he landed in the only area of the median that had grass.

The ground was soft. It rained the night before.

He was surrounded by members of the OPP's elite motorcycle unit, the Golden Helmets, who knew exactly what needed

to be done to save his life until paramedics could get there. One of the officers just happened to have a tourniquet in his kit.

The hospital in Barrie was only about 10 kilometres away. A Toronto-based doctor from Sunnybrook hospital — which has the largest trauma unit in Canada — was visiting a doctor friend in Barrie and assisted in Tucker's emergency care.

The doctor contacted Sunnybrook and staff knew what they were facing once Tucker arrived by air ambulance.

"People really stepped up, and it's been so wonderful in so many different ways," Michelle Tucker said.

"As horrible as this incident has been, I think it has brought out so many positive things in our lives that we had no idea about. We knew we were loved, but it is amazing to see the support from our church and our neighbours at home."

"People in our neighbourhood put together a meal train and take turns bringing food to the home. You expect that in the first week or so, but we still have people bringing us meals at night. It's been wonderful, because I'm still working and he's in therapy, but I said to the woman who is running it, I'm actually embarrassed this is still going on."

Tucker is mobile again with the aid of a walker and prosthetic leg. He has lost nearly 50 pounds but was at city hall Monday morning.

He received a plaque from Mayor Brian McMullan recognizing Tucker's service to the community and his courage and determination in recovering from his crash.

Tucker is a member of the elite OPP Golden Helmets precision motorcycle team and is trained in providing VIP escorts for heads of state and celebrities, including U.S. President Barack Obama and Queen Elizabeth.

Tucker said he isn't done with police work.

"I'm not depressed, but sometimes I get a little sad and there are some shadows. But I'm going to be OK," he said. "I really hope something good can come out of it."

"I want to work. The OPP has been very positive about me coming back to work, but I don't want to go back and put in my time. I know I'll never be on the road again,



BILL SAWCHUK/QMI
AGENCY NIAGARA
OPP Const. Pete Tucker and his wife Michelle. Tucker survived serious injuries on the Hwy. 400 north of Barrie at the end of June. He was riding his police motorcycle when he was struck by a goose in flight. Tucker was recognized for his service to the city.

but there are many things I can put my mind to."

He is undergoing near-daily physiotherapy. His right knee is still a mess. He has three torn ligaments that have to be repaired at some point.

"He's a determined fellow," said

Staff Sgt. Jan Idzenga of the Niagara OPP. "He doesn't want this to define who he is. He wants to be back at work, which is truly inspirational with what he has been through."

"I know he is really eager to get back and pushing himself to get

there. There is no doubt he can contribute to the organization. He is a heck of an officer."

"There are lots of positions we will be able to fit him into when he's ready. I have no doubt he will find some meaningful work. He's that type of guy."

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COMMENT

The ABCs of local government

DAVID SIEGEL

For QMI Agency Niagara

Now that new councils are being sworn in, there are a number of decisions that need to be made at the beginning of the term.

One of the most important is appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions. These are bodies that have a relationship to the local municipalities, but are separate entities at arm's length from direct control by local council.

The main ABCs related to Niagara regional council are the police services board and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA). Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) relates to the region and to the three municipalities in which it is located (Niagara-on-the-Lake,

Niagara Falls, and Fort Erie).

These organizations generally have a separate corporate existence, they are governed by a board, and they are at arm's length from the local government, although the length of that arm varies.

Police services board are in place to insulate the police service from direct, day-to-day political control. The conservation authority is a separate body because its boundaries follow the watershed and not the political boundaries of the region. For example, NPCA extends into Hamilton and Haldimand County. The NPC is really a provincial body, but Niagara area municipalities can make appointments to its board because of the direct impact the NPC has on them.

The governing body of

ABCs is a separate board. The police services board consists of seven members & four appointed by regional council and the remainder by the province. The NPC board consists of 12 members & four appointed by local municipalities and the remainder by the province.

The NPCA is governed by a 15-member board, 12 appointed by Niagara Region, two by the City of Hamilton and one by Haldimand County.

Tension can arise between the municipality and the ABC because the ABC is providing a municipal service and it frequently draws on municipal funds, but the council does not have the ability to control its activities directly. This creates frustration on the part of councillors who feel that while they must bear the political consequences

of raising revenue for these bodies, they cannot exercise direct control over them.

However, councillors can exercise significant control over these bodies through the appointment of their boards. The problem is that sometimes councils do not take the appointment process seriously enough. Council should fill these positions in the same manner that it would fill any other position with the municipality. Applicants should be evaluated based on their qualifications for the position and their willingness to support the position of the council.

Council's weakness can arise from an excessive deference to the arm's length provision of some of these bodies. The arm's length provision with regard to the police services board is meant to prevent political involvement in the day-to-

day operation of the police service, not to exempt the police service from policy direction by the council which funds its operation.

For example, it would be inappropriate to ask a candidate for the board if she will help you get your black-sheep uncle out of his next DUI. However it is entirely appropriate to ask candidates what level of budget increase is acceptable for the police service, or to what extent should the service's hiring policy should reflect a concern for diversity. The first is an operational issue which must be carefully guarded by the police service; the other two questions are policy issues which should be determined by the elected council. Candidates should have a job interview and should make commitments to council about their views on significant

policy issues.

The other source of council's weakness is that these appointments are sometimes seen as plums that are the subject of lobbying and horse trading among council members. This form of decision making is not justifiable when an important public trust is at stake.

As residents, we should be watching how carefully our elected representatives exercise their appointment prerogative. Are appointments made by some back-room horse-trading? Or is there a transparent process that ensures that the best people are appointed to these very important jobs?

David Siegel is a professor of political science at Brock University. His new book, *Leaders in the Shadows: The Leadership Qualities of Municipal Chief Administrative Officers*, is due out in December.

Shipwrecks – Ignatij Sergeyev

SKIP GILLHAM

For QMI Agency Niagara

Despite the cold war, it was not unusual to see the "hammer and sickle" of the Russian fleet on the Great Lakes.

The Russians sent a variety of ships to the inland seas and many often loaded grain or manufactured goods.

The *Ignatij Sergeyev* was built at Gdansk, Poland, in 1968. The 164.54-metre-long diesel powered freighter had five cargo holds and could carry 12,640 tonnes of cargo.

The ship came through the St. Lawrence Seaway for the first time in 1982. With the break up of the Soviet Union, this vessel moved to the Ukrainian Shipping Co.

The *Ignatij Sergeyev* was arrested at Kakinada, India, on Nov. 12, 2000, following a collision with a local dredger. The owners were assessed a huge fine which they would, or could, not pay. As a result, the 32-year-old vessel was beached and abandoned. It was sold to local shipbreakers later in the year and dismantled.



PHOTO: RON REAPPE COLLECTION

LOCAL NEWS

■ **COMMUNITY:** Brock experts say stopping it early makes a lifetime of difference

Bullying leaps from playground to office

DON FRASER
QMI Agency Niagara

For the bullied child, the abuse can start early and generate a lifetime of mental-health misery.

For the young bully, over time that aggression can become a never-ending wrecking ball.

That means bullying has to be quelled as early as possible, said Lisa Barrow, assistant professor at Brock University's Goodman School of Business.

She has studied the way bullying continues disease-like into adulthood and infects a workplace.

"If these behaviours are not addressed at a younger age — from four years old to teenagers — then the bully begins to believe that behaviour is acceptable," said Barrow.

"As an adult, they become a manager — or a leader, and they will tend to rely on that bullying as they interact with employees."

Meanwhile a child, targeted by bullies "may also grow up with a sense of resentment and a need to get back at someone for what they have experienced."

When in a position of authority, they might bully others to regain their own sense of lost power.

"With adult bullying, it's very subtle," she adds. "A manager is not going to punch you in the nose, or steal your lunch money."

"But they can embrace behaviours that devalue people."

That includes public humiliations, unfair promotion denials or yelling and relentless teasing, "and they may try to enlist the assistance of others."

Drew Dane, a psychology professor at the university, said the damage toll on young victims is clear as they get older. They can experience everything from self-esteem issues and anxiety

disorders to depression and suicidal thoughts.

Bullies themselves can cause much worse work chaos — they can graduate to anti-social actions, even serious crime.

"So it would be beneficial to address this as early as possible, and prevent the behaviours from occurring and the consequences that go along with it," said Dane, a clinical psychologist who specializes in bullying.

He said there are also different motivations and incentives in bullying once adolescence hits.

Pre-adolescents might be focused on power, like controlling situations with their friends and snatching valued things like toys.

After puberty, issues arise with bullying focused around dating and sex opportunities.

"With that, the game changes a little

hit," Dane said.

To that extent, male bullies can display physical strength and dominance they think would be attractive to prospective partners.

Female adolescents can use bullying for social things, like peer exclusion and rumour-spreading to damage the "reputation and relationships of

rivals that might be competing for a boyfriend."

Dane said he and colleagues also see bullying as a "cost-benefit analysis," where it can seem more beneficial for those who do it.

A key solution — and it has to start young — is to minimize any benefit and increase negative consequences a bully

receives for their behaviour.

"You can have clear anti-bullying policies at schools — parents can remain knowledgeable about their child's behaviour. And bullying is more likely to happen with peers, where it's reinforced or encouraged by peers," Dane said.

"All these things can be addressed early on."



Niagara Catholic District School Board education director John Crocco talks about how the board will implement Random Act of Kindness Day on Nov. 4, Wednesday, October 5, 2011 in Welland, Ont.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **NUTRITION:** Breakfast program kick-starts the day for students

Getting the fuel to learn

ALISON LANGLEY

QMI Agency Niagara

Breakfast fuels the mind, but

it can be a challenge finding the time to create a nutritious meal in the morning, says Welland celebrity chef Anna Olson.

"Breakfast sets our day," the Food Network Canada host said. "If we are fuelled, then we respond, learn, process and

retain information more effectively."

In the rush to get out the door in the morning, it can be difficult to slot in time to eat.

To fill that void, Niagara Nutrition Partners serves breakfast to more than 1,300 children at 208 schools and community programs across the region.

Last Thursday, Olson lent her celebrity status to raise awareness of the nonprofit agency and to discuss the importance of a well-balanced diet and healthy living.

She was at Richmond St. Public School in Thorold to share a healthy recipe with students.

"Engaging the students in the preparation of meals connects them to what they are eating and why," Olson said.

"Kids are a part of the preparation, their pride and involvement will give them the capacity to try new foods, and then they grow up to be knowledgeable cooks and diners themselves."

Studies show skipping breakfast interferes with cognition and learning, and effects are more pronounced in nutritionally at-risk children than in well-nourished children.

Established in 1998, Niagara Nutrition Partners promotes the connection between healthy food choices and improved learning for children. It facilitates healthy nutritious food programs at a variety of elementary and secondary schools in each of Niagara's 12 municipalities.

Working together with more than 400 volunteers and community partners including District School Board

of Niagara and Niagara Catholic District School Board, it is able to offer support to student nutrition programs through provincial grants and local fundraising efforts.

"We couldn't do this without the support of our community partners who step up to the plate with donations and other supports," said program manager Anne Kirkpatrick.

Olson has been involved with the program for several years.

"I believe it's important that all students have access to healthy food, at breakfast particularly, and I like that Niagara Nutrition Partners accomplishes this equitably," Olson said.

"I commend (them) for what they can accomplish, especially considering that they are volunteer-driven ... a true credit to community involvement."

FirstOntario Credit Union recently came on board to assist with student nutrition programs in five regions, including Niagara.

"This is the value credit unions bring to communities," said Mary De Sousa, executive vice-president of marketing at FirstOntario Credit Union.

"It's heart-breaking to hear a young person hasn't had a meal at any time of the day, so through our financial donation and our volunteers, we hope to change that."

For further information about Niagara Nutrition Partners or to donate or volunteer, visit www.NiagaraNutritionPartners.ca.

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Outdoor Christmas Market
Friday, December 5, 2014 | 4pm to 10pm

Under the Fonthill Arches, 20 Pelham Town Square - Fonthill

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Tuesday, December 2 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Wednesday, December 3 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Thursday, December 4 10:00 am – 11:00 am

Drop in and try any session for \$6 or purchase your 10 + 2 bonus passes for \$60. For more info on any Zumba classes, contact 905-892-2607 x329.

Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! - December 2 & 4

Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join ours! Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

Arena Programs

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Friday Nov 28 4:00 – 5:00 pm 8:00 – 9:30 pm Sunday Nov 30 1:00-2:20 pm Tuesday Dec 2 7:30 – 8:30 pm	Thursday Nov 27 1:00 – 2:00 pm	Friday Nov 28 10:00 – 11 am Tuesday Dec 2 1:00 – 2:00 pm	Friday Nov 28 9:00 – 10:00 am Tuesday Dec 2 8:00 – 9:00 am	Thursday Nov 27 10:30 – 11:45 am Monday Dec 1 9:30 – 10:45 am	Thursday Nov 27 9:30 – 10:30 am	Thursday Nov 27 2:00 – 3:00 pm Monday Dec 1 11 am – 12 pm	Friday Dec 5 7:30 pm vs. Thorold

Hockey Skills Hour – Come out to practice your hockey skills and learn from a Pelham Panthers Jr. B. Trainer. Ages 10 and up welcome. Shiny rates apply.

COMMUNITY EVENTS & NEWS

CALL FOR MEMBERS – TOWN OF PELHAM BOARDS & COMMITTEES

The Town of Pelham is seeking interested individuals to join the:

- Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (one person for a four-year term)
- Pelham Library Board (eight persons for a four-year term)
- Committee of Adjustment (five persons for a four-year term)
- Board of Directors for Peninsula West Power Inc. (one person for a three-year term)

Visit pelham.ca for application details and to **apply by Monday, December 1, 2014.**

For more information, please contact the Town Clerk at nbozzato@pelham.ca or (905) 892-2607 ext. 315.

2015 Town of Pelham Budget Open House – Monday, December 8, 2014 @ 6:30PM in Pelham Council Chambers at Town Hall. If unable to attend, please provide a written submission to ourbudget@pelham.ca or at Town Hall. For more information, visit pelham.ca.

Santa Claus Parade Applications – now available at Town Hall or online at pelham.ca

Outdoor Christmas Market Vendor Applications – now available at Town Hall or online at pelham.ca



CHRISTMAS IN PELHAM
November 5, 2014 – January 4, 2015



December 1 – January 1 (all day): Temperanceville Historic Display – Peace Park, Fonthill

December 1 – January 1: Christmas Light Displays & Competition – Throughout the Town

December 3 (2:00pm to 4:00pm): Lessons, Carols & Cookies – Fonthill United Church

December 5 (1:00pm to 3:00pm): Carolling in Downtown Fonthill – Downtown Fonthill

December 6 (9:30am to 1:00pm): Pelham Community Food Drive Benefitting Pelham Cares – Throughout the Town

Outdoor
Christmas Market
Under the Arches
Dec. 5 (4-10pm)

Meds matter when dealing with illness

RAY SPITERI
QMI Agency Niagara

Health officials are asking patients to play more of a role in their own safety.

Niagara Health System has launched a campaign to remind patients about the importance of bringing a list of their medications when visiting one of its sites, whether it's for a scheduled appointment or a visit to one of its emergency departments or urgent-care centres.

A recent review of patients

visiting emergency departments in Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines showed 30% of them brought their medication list to the hospital.

"Keeping an up-to-date list of medications with you provides important information for your health-care team, and it improves patient safety," said Alicia Niven, the health system's regional medication safety pharmacist.

Niven, who was the lead person behind the Your Med-

ications Matter Initiative, said sometimes patients rush to an NHS site, depending on the urgency of their condition, without thinking about what questions they might be asked by health officials.

She said while doctors and nurses can obtain pertinent information without having to rely on patients, having a list really can speed up the process.

"Having an accurate list of your medications and other key information is important,"

said Niven. "Tell us what you are taking and let us do the rest."

The health system has a print-friendly medication brochure on its website — www.niagarahealth.on.ca/en/patient-and-visitor-information — that allows patients to bring out their medication list, along with other vital information such as who prescribed the medication and how often it is taken.

"If someone has questions

or needs help filling out the form, they are encouraged to review the information with their community pharmacist," said Niven.

She said having a prepared list could also help patients going to new physicians or walk-in clinics.

In addition to the online brochure, Niven said the NHS is marketing the initiative at its sites and through a YouTube video.

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LOCAL NEWS

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Canuck spin on a Black Friday tradition

DON FRASER

QMI Agency Niagara

Joanne Ross remembers when Black Friday crossed the border into the Great White North.

It had always been an American retail sales blitz taking place the Friday after U.S. Thanksgiving.

In Canada, it only gained traction during the recession-ravaged 2008 retail season.

As much as anything, it was also about survival in a highly competitive cross-border shopping landscape.

"Back in 2008, several of our major Canadian retailers started running the Friday deals," said Ross, general manager of the new Outlet Collection at Niagara in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which is marking its first Black Friday.

"The whole notion was to try to discourage shoppers from leaving Canada."

By 2012, Black Friday in Canada was in full swing, she said. "And we're now looking at Black Friday as being pretty comparable to Boxing Day."

"Our retailers are able to provide some really good deals and customers embraced it," she said, adding the mall will open on 7 a.m. Friday.

"We're finding in our Iwanhoe Cambridge mails a lot of people are taking that Black Friday off (in Canada), as a vacation day," she said. "So the store traffic is really good."

Black Friday has stretched out to become a at least a week-end event for many stores. It now continues to Cyber Monday, which offers deals intended to switch on the online holiday season shopper.

Meanwhile, the battle of the Niagara frontier outlet malls is now full scale, with the two



JOANNE ROSS, QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Joanne Ross, GM of the Outlet Collection at Niagara, is preparing for the big shopping day. The Outlet Collection at Niagara will be offering Black Friday sales next Friday.

biggest going head to head.

The \$25-million Outlet Collection, which opened earlier this year, has totally changed that landscape as Canada's largest outlet mall.

Just kilometres away, Fashion Outlets of Niagara Falls, N.Y., has completed a \$71-million expansion and added 50 stores to its even larger campus.

Cross-border shoppers are "extremely important," said Fashion Outlets marketing manager Michael Powers. He spoke of the "value and variety that makes up our retail population," as being a reliable draw for Canadians.

Powers said despite the spread between the two currencies, "we still think those dollars will go just as far here, if not even further."

As for the Niagara-on-the-Lake mall, "we're always aware of what's happening in your neighbourhood," Powers said. "But we're looking to make the experience here the best it possibly can be and I think that will trump things."

"That our mall is an enclosed one helps us out this time of the year, especially with the weather we've been having."

Making it somewhat easier for Canadian retailers close to the U.S. is a weaker loonie that's worth 89 cents American.

Pen Centre marketing director Rick Woodward said a lower dollar "will also discourage, to some extent, people going across the river to shop."

Woodward acknowledged

the new Niagara competition, "but we've always had to deal with it, that's nothing new."

For the third year, the Pen is featuring a Black Friday sale that is actually a four-day event starting today.

"We wanted to grab those Niagara-area shoppers that might be predisposed to shop on Friday and get them to give us a chance of a day early," he said.

"That's proved very successful, so we'll be opening our doors early on Thursday and Friday at 8 a.m."

Among other incentives are tote bags for the first 450 shoppers today and Friday, and a free app called "savvy saver" developed last year, through which stores can upload sales and specials.

"We've been marketing it extensively ... hoping shoppers will download it and discover some of the best deals over those four days," Woodward said.

Seaway Mall in Welland has also found its Black Friday-associated events are well-received.

"This has kind of trickled in," said mall social media and event co-ordinator Alicia Rubino. "Two years ago, a couple of tenants had a promotion. Last year, a lot did and this year even more so."

"You saw the tenants jump

on board."

Their incentives include an early 9 a.m. opening that Friday, and flyers handed out at the entrances highlighting retailers promotions.

Duane Gibson, co-owner of Gibbys Electronics Supermarket, said Black Friday is a big deal for his St. Catharines store. He said cross-border shopping is not a major concern.

"We are very competitive," Gibson said, adding U.S. manufacturers are now giving his shop Black Friday-level deals that have dramatically reduced the spread between Canadian and American pricing.

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LOCAL NEWS

RALLY

Thousands demand end to hospital cuts

ALLAN BENNER
(QMI Agency Niagara)

Roger Montpetit is normally a relatively quiet 11-year-old — but last Friday afternoon, on the steps of Queen's Park in Toronto, he felt like a celebrity.

Thousands of people, most of whom he did not know, shouted his name in union: "Roger! Roger! Roger!"

Despite nervous jitters, the Grade 7 student at Welland's Plymouth Public School stepped up to the podium joining medical professionals, labour leaders and political representatives speaking at a rally organized by the Ontario Health Coalition to demand that the provincial government preserve hospital services across the province.

The planned closure of the Welland hospital brought Roger, his mother, Mary, and dozens of other Welland area residents to the provincial legislature, riding a bus to Toronto to participate along with more than 3,000 others from across the province in other communities where hospital services are being threatened with cutbacks and closures.

"I'm here to fight to keep our hospital open," Roger told the cheering crowd.

"We need our hospital because of the seniors and the very ill. Sometimes in an emergency it becomes a life and death situation. What makes them think a new hospital will be better?" he said, referring to plans in Niagara to close five hospitals and replace them with a single new facility to be constructed in Niagara Falls.

He said the politicians and health-care decision-makers might think differently if they were placed in the same position as the people their decisions affect.

"We should have been in our community. Take away their big salary, take away their cars and let them try to get to the new hospital," he said. "I'm 11 years old and I know this is wrong. They should know that, too."

As the crowd cheered following his speech, Fiona McMurrin from the south Niagara branch of the Council of Canadians said: "I think he's going to be our mascot, don't you?"

Roger said the experience "was awesome!"

Although he said he was very nervous about speaking during the event, if it helps save the Welland hospital it was worth it. "I really want to save our hospital," he said.

Referring to thousands of hospital bed closures during the past 20 years, Welland MPP Cindy Forster asked: "Does this look like a progressive government to you, a government that is actually dismantling our health-care system and closing our beds?"

Kathleen Wynne is here

today," Forster said — and she wasn't referring to the huge effigy of the premier that was displayed during the event. "Tell her, her government is not progressive. This reminds me of 1997-98 when we were walking down University Ave. under a Mike Harris government."

Sue Hotte from Niagara Health Coalition wasn't disappointed with the attendance from Niagara.

She said a bus carried about 50 people from Welland, Port Colborne, Wainfleet, Thorold, St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake to the rally, but many more Niagara residents made their own way to the event.

Carrying a bright red sign with "Save Niagara-on-the-Lake hospital" written on it, Sandra O'Connor said opposition to the closure of that facility this spring "is building."

"We're just starting. We just went through an election. It's such a difficult time," she said. "I think people are confused. They think it's a done deal and they don't have any recourse, but we're going to show them that there is a recourse and they can speak up."

Hotte said the health coalition hopes building on the momentum of the rally in the months ahead, hoping to ultimately stop plans calling for privatization of hospital services and the closure of hospitals.

"We're just going to keep at it," Hotte said.

Contacted last Friday afternoon, Niagara Health System spokesman Brady Wood said local hospital administration chose to refrain from commenting on the rally.

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Roger Montpetit and his mother Mary speaking at a health care rally at Queen's Park, Friday.

ALLAN BENNER/STAFF PHOTO

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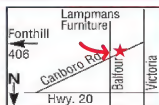
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■ WEATHER

Don't fear – winter should not be as bad as last year

DON FRASER
QMI Agency Niagara

Last week's snow was a far too early blast of winter for most.

But take heart — it's looking like we could get a break from last winter's painful polar vortex.

For these parts, "the forecast model is showing southern Ontario with either a normal or a little milder than normal" winter, said Environment Canada senior climatologist Dave Phillips.

NIAGARA REGION WINTER CONTROL

31 combined sanding/salting and snow plow vehicles
Total 2014 winter activity budget is about \$9.3 million

"And it will definitely be one heck of a lot milder than last year."

And a doozy it was, said Phillips. By his calculations, last year's stretch from November to March was the frostiest in 67 years.

Last Monday, emergency services in Niagara reported few traffic crashes or collisions despite the first significant snowfall of the season.

It wasn't the same report two days later, when Niagara got the remnant of south Buffalo's two-metre wallop.

Police are warning motorists to change their driving habits.

"Slow down and drive for the weather conditions," said acting Niagara Regional Police Staff Sgt. Jostie Hollingshead.

"Losing control in the snow is not an excuse for an accident, and charges will be laid."

Staff Sgt. Jan Idzenga of the Niagara detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police said he noticed more vehicles with snow tires than usual this season.

"It's a good thing to see, and I think after the winter we had last year a lot of drivers have seen the light."

If you haven't done it already, now is the time to get cars prepared and winterized, he added.

That includes ensuring your vehicle has decent wipers, a ready supply of wiper fluid and ensuring your vehicle is mechanically fit.

"Keep the speed down," Idzenga said. "You can have the best-equipped car in the world... (but if travelling too fast) and you're on ice, you're not stopping."

"That's why it was good to see drivers (last Monday) morning keeping their speeds down."

Idzenga's hope is to not have a repeat of last winter, with collisions in the area the most officers had seen in about five to six years.



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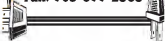
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■ **NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY:** More personnel changes

Senior staffer no longer with NPCA

DAN DAKIN

OM Agency Niagara

A senior staffer with Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority who earned more in 2013 than anyone else in the organization has been let go.

Board members of the NPCA received an e-mail Nov. 13 saying Mary Stack, a longtime employee, "was no longer with the organization."



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■ **SUMMIT:** Making Niagara's future brighter

Meridian CEO shares his business insight

TOM RICCIUTO
(M) Agency Niagara

CEO of Meridian Credit Union.

He said one only needs to look at companies like BlackBerry, Kodak and BlackBerry to see what has happened to major companies that once had a large share of the marketplace.

Growth cannot exist without innovation and those businesses that fail to see what is taking place around them will have a difficult time, added Bill Maurin, president and



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Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox (varicella-zoster virus). After the chickenpox blisters heal, the virus remains dormant in nerve cells in your body. It can become reactivated after many years resulting in shingles. It is not known exactly why the virus becomes reactivated, however it is thought that having a weakened immune system along with physical trauma, UV light or stress may play a role. The risk of developing shingles increases with age and people over 50 years old are at the greatest risk. The symptoms include a painful, blistering rash that often breaks out in one part of the body, usually the chest or upper back are involved. Sometimes the pain resulting from shingles can last for weeks, months, or rarely years, after the rash heals. This lasting pain has been described as burning, aching, throbbing or stabbing and can result from something as little as a breeze or the touch of clothing on the skin. Older people are again at greater risk. Shingles may also result in skin infections at the site of the rash or scarring following healing of the rash.

Fortunately, a vaccine is now available to boost your immune system and help to prevent shingles and its complications. It is called Zostavax and is available to adults over 50 years old. The vaccine cannot be used if you are already experiencing symptoms of shingles; it is only used for prevention. This vaccine was found to reduce the risk of developing shingles by about 50-70% (depending on your age) within the first year after receiving the vaccine.

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RON PARTON
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"When growth is on the agenda, you need to have a clear understanding of how your business is different. What is it that sets your business apart from the competition? What makes you relevant?" He asked people attending the Niagara Business Summit last Friday at the Scottish Bank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls.

Maurin, who was keynote speaker, explained how Meridian has changed over the years in order to remain competitive with other financial organizations, and how some of those same basic principals can be applied to any other business.

"We knew we could never win a head-to-head battle with the big banks. They outgunned us on distribution, technology and resources so we had to reshape the game in order to play to our strengths," said Maurin, who has been a part of Meridian since 2002 and was selected as the company CEO in May of 2014.

He stressed the importance of

looking after the needs of your customers, listening to their stories, taking the time to understand their goals, and even knowing their names when they walk into your business.

Maurin said we remember the person who goes the extra mile to see that our needs are being met because it's not an every-day occurrence. It should be, but it's not, and that's why we remember it because it is becoming increasingly rare.

He also touched on the importance of hiring the right talent and to then focus, nurture and develop that talent.

"Take care of your employees because at the end of the day it only makes sense to take care of the people who are taking care of the customers," said Maurin.

Also, a business should not get romantic about where their revenue is coming from because that might change in the future.

Eastman Kodak, the company that practically invented photography, failed to adapt to the digital

world filed for bankruptcy, and the list goes on," said Maurin, who also touched on a famous quote from Babe Ruth that says "Yesterday's home runs don't win today's games".

That saying, he added, is a good reminder to businesses that you shouldn't coast too much after achieving a goal. And don't be shy from copying something that a different business from your own is doing and adapt it to your own needs.

"Ultimately, achieving sustained business growth means being able to overcome adversity, you have to adapt," said Maurin. "Many times things will be out of your control that are going to have an impact on your business. The key will be in how you deal with those challenges, adapt and deal with overcoming adversity."

Last Friday's event was presented by Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce.

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■ COMMUNITY



MIKE DIBATTISTA/
STAFF PHOTO

Niagara Regional Housing and the YWCA set up an interactive display at the MacBain Community Centre to raise awareness of the need for affordable housing.

Cardboard house represents homelessness in Niagara

ALISON LANGLEY
QMI Agency Niagara

There are 5,868 families in Niagara on a waiting list for affordable housing.

In some cities, that wait can be up to 11 years.

To raise awareness of the dire need for affordable housing, Niagara Regional Housing and the YWCA set up an interactive display at the MacBain Community Centre last Friday.

The Cardboard House is a 24-foot-by-16-foot structure that invites visitors to walk through four rooms to learn about the misconceptions, realities and solutions to homelessness in Niagara.

In the last room, a statement on the wall reads "You Can Create Change Now," and the public was invited to leave positive and reflective messages of hope.

"The whole idea is to engage the public," said Wendy Thompson, community resource unit manager at Niagara Regional Housing, the administrator of affordable housing for the region.

"If we just put out brochures, no one would really take notice but this house gets people talking about affordable housing and homelessness and it has been very effective."

She said many people are unaware of the fact that there is a lack of affordable housing options in Niagara.

The house was set up to mark National Housing Day which commemorates the 1998 declaration by the Big City Mayor's Caucus that homelessness in Canada had reached crisis proportions.

alison.langley@sunmedia.ca
Twitter @tallisonlangley

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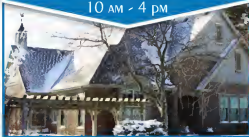
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16th ANNUAL ROTARY Holiday House Tour

Friday, Dec 5 to Saturday, Dec 6
10 AM - 4 PM



The 16th annual Rotary Holiday House Tour invites everyone to visit a variety of historic and contemporary properties, all decorated for the holiday season by local businesses and volunteers. Your support benefits countless others in Niagara and throughout the world. Tour operates regardless of the weather. \$25.00 per person. Order online at www.niagara-on-the-lake.com. Purchased tickets can be picked up between 10 am and 5 pm, 7 days a week, at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, on the lower level at 26 Queen St. Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Candlelight Stroll



Friday, December 5

Take a guided stroll through historic old town, accompanied by local choirs and seasonal entertainment. Festivities begin at 6:30 pm on Queen Street in front of the Clock Tower and Courthouse.

Proceeds from this year's candle sales will support Mike Strange's BoxRun Challenge, an initiative to raise awareness for childhood cancers. \$3 per candle or 2 for \$5.00.

Please bring a non-perishable food item for Newark Neighbours.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

26 Queen Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake 905-468-1950 niagaraonthe-lake.com

26th Annual Candle Light Stroll

Friday, Dec. 5 | QUEEN STREET HERITAGE DISTRICT | STARTING AT 6:30 PM

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Annual Candlelight Stroll takes place on Friday Dec. 5, with caroling from the Court House steps beginning at 6:30 pm.

A favourite tradition for many families, the Candlelight Stroll begins with the Town Crier gathering everyone together in front of the Court House on Queen Street, with carol singing and the candle lighting ceremony. All participants in the stroll have an opportunity to purchase a candle with cup for \$3, or two for \$5.

As is customary at the Stroll, there will be a special performance by Debbie Whitehouse, singing from the Court House steps, later joined by the Salvation Army Band, as part of the opening ceremonies.

Lord Mayor Patrick Dartle will introduce Mike Strange, founder of the BoxRun Challenge, this year's recipient of the



Candlelight Stroll candle sale proceeds. The BoxRun Challenge is an initiative to raise awareness for childhood cancers.

Joining Strange, who is leading the stroll through the Heritage District aboard a horse-drawn carriage, Fort Erie resident Brandon Caruana. Brandon was diagnosed with pineoblastoma (brain tumour) in 2008 and since has been cancer-free for the past five years.

The stroll route will be alive with entertainment from various choirs and musical entertainers, including the Salvation Army Band, the

baggies of Norm Haigh, the Fort George Junior Life and Drum Corps, Grace United Church, Sing Niagara, Niagara Christian Assembly, A Capella Niagara, German School Choir, Parliament Oak School, Bethany Bell Ringers, Imagis, Brass Quintet, Sir Winston Churchill Choir and Joyful Noise. Debbie Whitehouse will lead the carol singing from the Court House steps.

A Christmas wagon will be displayed by Sentineal Carriages on Queen Street and we hope to fill it high with donations of non-perishable goods for Newark Neighbours.

Many volunteers make this event a tremendous success—members of the Chamber of Commerce and the Town staff all work together to produce a perfect evening.

The Chamber of Commerce is delighted to be able to continue this well-loved tradition of sharing in the joys of the Holiday Season with neighbours and friends and looks forward to welcoming new visitors this year. For more information, call (905) 468-1950 or visit our website, www.niagara-on-the-lake.com.

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TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE**SANTA CLAUS PARADE**

SATURDAY, DEC 13 | 11 AM



What better way to infuse Christmas spirit into the upcoming holiday season than by attending the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Annual Santa Claus Parade. Noted as one of Ontario's best Santa Claus Parades, come celebrate and catch a glimpse of the big guy himself, Santa. Starts at 11am along Queen Street. Call 905-468-4261 for more information.



Stay for the weekend! Friday night, enjoy the "Candlelight Stroll", then warm up at the Campbell Scott house with mulled wine or hot chocolate, surrounded by works of art. Revel in the enchanting town atmosphere and holiday shopping all weekend long!!

For information/ticket purchasing, call 905-351-3807 or purchase online at www.niagaraonthelake.org click on Home/Events/Holiday House Tour

Tickets are also available at Selected Avondale stores in NOTL, Niagara Falls, Fonthill, St. Catharines & Thorold; in NOTL, from Crabtree and Evelyn, Bosley Real Estate, NOTL Chamber of Commerce (niagaraonthelake.com), UPS Store, Wine Country Wineries (Queen St.) and Hendricks vint-n-arc in Vinlot from Phil's vint-n-arc, Royal Florist and Garden Centre, and More Gardens, from Peller Estates Winery & Trius Winery at Hillebrand Estates, & from NOTL Rotary Club members.

FORT GEORGE GARRISON CHRISTMAS

SATURDAY, DEC. 13 | NOON-4 PM



Experience Christmas past at Fort George Garrison style just like officers, soldiers and their families did. Savour special dishes in the Officers' kitchen and bask in the glow of the fire against the pomp and pageantry of the fife and drums, create period crafts and play games for all ages. Join the costumed staff and volunteers of Fort George for a day of festive merry-making and revelry you will remember for years to come! For information: 905-468-6614, email ont-niagara@pc.gc.ca or www.pc.gc.ca/fortgeorge

NEW YEAR'S DAY LEEVE

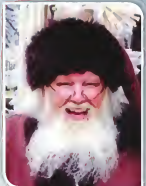
JANUARY 1 | 3 PM | NAVY HALL



The New Year's Levee is a tradition dating back to the beginning of government, where citizens would renew their allegiance to the Crown. In modern times, we commemorate this tradition and invite all residents and visitors to gather on the first day of the New Year. Official toasts, presented at 4:00 pm by local dignitaries, followed by a ceremonial gun salute by Fort George staff and a music presentation by the Fort George Fife and Drum Corps. Complimentary light refreshments available. Call 905-468-6621 or visit www.friend-soffortgeorge.ca

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JANUARY 1 - 31, 2015



The Niagara-on-the-Lake Icelwine Festival will engage all of your senses during this celebration of all things Icelwine. It doesn't matter if you are a wine enthusiast or a cocktail fan, a foodie or a music lover; there's sure to be an event that speaks to your passion while offering an unforgettable Icelwine experience. Visit www.niagaraonthelake.com/icelwine for more event details and tickets.

SPARKLE & ICE

Friday, JANUARY 16



In its second year Sparkle and Ice is a celebration with Niagara-on-the-Lake Icelwinemakers and their VQA wines paired with Icelwine inspired tastings from the Signature Kitchen Chefs. The beautiful setting of the Great Hall in the Courthouse, with live entertainment and an official toast, served outdoors in the Icelwine Village at 10:30 pm, will make this an evening to remember. \$95.00 per person. Purchase your tickets at www.niagaraonthelake.com

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE
ICE WINE VILLAGE

Saturday, JAN. 17 & Sunday, JAN. 18

Saturday, JAN 24 & Sunday, JAN. 25



Niagara-on-the-Lake's historic Queen Street transforms into a winter wonderland as the town comes together to play their part in wine country's annual Icelwine celebration with culinary creations, music, shopping and sparkling ice sculptures. www.niagaraonthelake.com/icelwine

MORE LOCAL EVENTS

Enjoy Your Stay – NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM
Exhibition from JAN 1 to MARCH 31, 2015. An exhibition exploring some of Niagara-on-the-Lake's historic hotels and inns. Niagara Historical Museum, 43 Castlereagh Street, 905-468-3912.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER, JANUARY 24: Set your taste buds free at a unique Niagara-on-the-Lake food and wine event. Events taking place weekends of January 24, March 21 and April 11. This is an opportunity that showcases the area's top culinary talents paired with some of the best wines and hospitality the region has to offer. 1-877-342-4374, atstefoniagara.ca.

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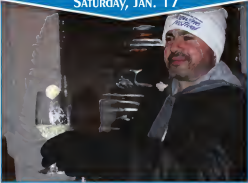
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Flash and Panache: ICEWINE Cocktail Competition

Saturday, Jan. 17



The Icelwine Village in the Heritage District takes on a whole new energy once the lights are dimmed...from 9 to 11 pm on Saturday evening, get out and experience the amazing icewine cocktails created by the Signature Kitchen Chefs of Niagara-on-the-Lake. And it's a Niagara-on-the-Lake competition, so you know the bar will be high -- and it's a bar made of ice! An event not to be missed, music, interesting cocktails and culinary accompaniments from the Signature Kitchen Chefs. www.niagaraonthelake.com/icewine

ICEBREAKERS' Comedy Festival

THURSDAY, JAN. 22 TO
SATURDAY, JAN. 24

Make sure to plan a weekend around this new Icelwine Festival experience -- Icebreakers' Comedy Festival will leave you laughing, with great memories of Niagara-on-the-Lake's newest event. Held in local venues throughout the town, this comedy festival features quality performers, with a final gala performance on Saturday night. Full listings of performers, locations and times will be posted at www.niagaraonthelake.com. Phone 905-468-1950.

Shop - Sip - Sample - SAVOUR

Saturday Jan. 24 to
Sunday Jan. 25

A chance to combine several favourite Niagara-on-the-Lake experiences in one! Step inside the diverse settings of the Landmark Shops in the Heritage District and enjoy Icelwine poured by the Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake accompanied with culinary samples from the Signature Kitchens of Niagara-on-the-Lake at the Ice Wine Village. Meet the merchants, chefs and wine experts of Niagara-on-the-Lake. We can't wait to welcome you inside! Call 905-468-1950 for full details or send an email to chamberevents@niagaraonthelake.com. To order your \$30 Insider's Passes online, please go to www.niagaraonthelake.com/icewine.

DAYS OF WINE AND CHOCOLATE WEEKENDS IN FEBRUARY.

Celebrate the beauty of winter and romance of Valentine's Day in Historic Niagara-on-the-Lake as you explore pairings of two of your favourite indulgences -- wine and chocolate. For more information 905-468-1950 or visit niagaraonthelake.com.

Spring Fabulicious

Feb. 28 to March 6



An opportunity to dine at some of Niagara-on-the-Lake's finest restaurants with special prix fixe menus featuring seasonally sensational three-course meals. \$25 for lunch, \$35 for dinner. Come see why Niagara-on-the-Lake was voted as Canada's Culinary Capital of Canada in 2011 by TripAdvisor. Visit niagaraonthelake.com for full restaurant menus.

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■ PAN AM GAMES

Taking command of Pan Am Games security

ALISON LANGLEY
QMI Agency Niagara

Steve McIntyre is relishing the relative calm of his life. He's well aware that in only a

few months from now he'll be busier than he's ever been.

"Come next year, particularly in July, I'll be going 24 hours a day, seven days a week," he said.

The Niagara Falls resident recently joined Contemporary Security Canada and will be overseeing all aspects of security communications for the 2015 Pan Am Games in

Toronto.

McIntyre is responsible for the multi-venue sporting event's C3 — a military term meaning command, control and communications — operations.

"Essentially, I'll be developing, designing and directing all the communications for security at the Pan Am Games," he said.

"I'll be ultimately responsible for about 7,000 people."

McIntyre had spent the last four years at the Scotiabank Convention Centre as director of security.

The decision to leave his post, he said, was a tough one.

PAN AM GAMES

The 2015 Pan Am Games will be held from July 10 to 26 in Toronto, with events being held in 17 other communities including Welland and St. Catharines.

Approximately 6,000 athletes from 41 nations are expected to participate in 36 sports. For more information, visit www.toronto2015.org.

"I worked with amazing people at Scotiabank," the 43-year-old said.

"But this is on a global scale. How many people can put something like this on their resume. It's a great opportunity to work with people from all around the world."

When not busy preparing for the upcoming games, the Stamford Collegiate graduate is also a volunteer firefighter in Chippawa.

"A long time ago when I was a teenager, my mother was quite sick and the volunteer fire department came and took care of her and I took that as my cue to become involved," he said.

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Twitter @tallangley

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Notice of Public Meeting

Class 9 Pesticide Use for 2013

As per Ontario Regulation 63/09, Lookout Point Country Club will be holding a Public Meeting to present the Annual Report regarding the use of Class 9 Pesticides for the 2013 season. This meeting will take place on Friday, November 28th at 9:00 a.m. in the banquet hall located at:

Lookout Point Country Club
209 Tice Road
Fonthill, ON
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For more information, please contact Aldo Bortolon, Golf Course Superintendent at 905-687-0150.

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■ MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Regional councillors generally 'well behaved:' integrity commish

ROB HOULE

QM Agency Niagara

Niagara Region councillors have been generally "well behaved" in the nine months he has been integrity commissioner George Rust-D'Eye says.

"If anything, there have been relatively few complaints," Rust-D'Eye said over the phone from his Brantford office. "Especially being an election year, which is when they are most prevalent."

"There were a number, as I remember, against one particular councillor."

The three most recent complaints dealt with by Rust-D'Eye, who is on a one-year contract until the end of January, involved Coun. Andy Petrowski of St. Catharines.

In a report to council in mid-September, Rust-D'Eye dismissed a complaint against Petrowski and Niagara Falls regional Coun. Selina Volpatti alleging they broke conflict of interest rules when Petrowski offered to fundraise sponsorship money for the region-organized Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference held in Niagara Falls in late May and Volpatti gave him a list of potential sponsors.

In the same report, Rust-D'Eye said it was not within his authority to deal with another complaint against Petrowski, filed by the same person, which alleged a breach of conflict of interest rules pertaining to Petrowski offering to raise money for a legal defence fund for the Township of Wainfleet in its battle against a wind-energy project. The complaint said because of the Petrowski should not have taken part in any discussion at the region related to industrial wind turbines. In his report to council, Rust-D'Eye said he had decided to suspend, and not commence, an inquiry into that complaint "in view of the fact that the complaint alleges a breach of statute, which... I do not have jurisdiction to investigate."

In a report dated Oct. 18, but submitted to council Nov. 6, Rust-D'Eye dismissed another complaint levelled against Petrowski, this one alleging he acted inappropriately during a charity golf tournament on June 26.

The incident in question took place at the 16th tee when the complainant, an employee of a mental-health agency, approached Petrowski and his playing partners to hand out

a package of five tees, one of which was a different colour to symbolize the complainant said, the one in five children who has a mental-health problem. The report says it is alleged Petrowski, "who has strongly-held opinions about the portrayal of the mentally ill, stated, in response to the complainant's proffering of the golf tees," that the one-in-five statement was sensationalism. "This led to an extended political rant," the complainant is quoted as saying in the report. "He demanded responses from me. He was extremely belligerent, confrontational and threatening."

The report says Petrowski admitted he was "passionate" about his opinion, but not confrontational.

Rust-D'Eye dismissed the complaint, in part because it was brought to his attention five weeks after the incident, originally by the employer, not the employee, and because "it has not been established to my satisfaction that at the time of the incident Coun. Petrowski was acting in, or representing, his capacity as a regional councillor."

Rust-D'Eye said because the conversation between Petrowski and the complainant was not recorded and there were varying observations from witnesses and participants, he could not fall on the side of either the councillor or complainant.

In any case, Rust-D'Eye wrote, "I do not believe that the matter is of such a degree of importance to warrant further consideration by me or by regional council."

Rust-D'Eye said he has offered to hold an orientation session informing in-coming councillors "to bring them up to date on the code of conduct and what's required of them as councillors."

Petrowski said Tuesday the complaints against him have been a "witch hunt."

"It's no surprise that I have been the number one political target of the same group behind the other two (earlier) 'citizen' complaints who wants to muzzle me from defending the taxpayers," Petrowski said.

"It's too inexcusable that my political enemies are wasting valuable tax dollars to plot their failed political attacks against me."

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■ **GAMING:** Corner stores concerned about online gambling site

Lotto sales 'pay off my utility bills'

RAY SPITERI
QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara Falls convenience store owners are concerned about what Ontario's new Internet gaming site could mean for their businesses.

The gaming landscape is changing. Along with allowing players to try their hand at a variety of video slot games, blackjack, baccarat and roulette, the site will also allow Ontarians to buy lottery tickets online — for Lotto 6/49 and Lotto Max games.

Jignesh Batel, owner of Big Bee Convenience and Food Mart, said his business could lose "a lot of money" because the store counts on lottery sales.

"We have so many customers, they just come here to buy a lottery (ticket) and once they see ... we have something special for the chips, we have something special for drinks ... they buy

it," said Batel, whose store is at Victoria Ave. and Morrison St.

Batel said his lottery ticket sales "pay off my utility bills."

Ontario is expected to launch its Internet gaming site within weeks.

Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. recently issued an invitation to 53,000 loyal customers, offering them a sneak peek at PlayOLG before it opens to the general public.

David Won, owner of Morrison Variety on Morrison St., said he believes the site will hurt his business because, like Big Bee, customers often pick up food or drinks when they purchase Lotto tickets.

He said there is no incentive for Lotto players to visit variety stores if they can buy their tickets online from home.

Kyungbum Seol, of Niagara Variety on Victoria Ave., said it's tough enough

for businesses to stay afloat these days, they don't need government putting more roadblocks in their way.

"Too much regulation," he said, pointing to when stores had to start hiding cigarettes from public view.

Niagara Falls MPP Wayne Gates said he understands the frustration of small independent store owners.

"In the province of Ontario, 67,000 people live in convenience stores, generating 2.4 million customers," he said. "That's 2.4 million customers buying (products) at those stores."

Gates, who is the NDP's critic for small business, said a number of convenience and independent store owners attended Queen's Park (recently) to talk to the government about industry concerns.

"They announced this ... the day after these business owners were here, so they didn't have a chance to have

any dialogue on this."

As for poker on the new site, enthusiasts will have to settle for single-player games to start.

"(You) can't play with other people around the country," said OLG spokesman Tony Bitoni. "The peer-to-peer poker will come online in the next phase."

Sports games and bingo are also possible future additions to the site, he said.

Eligible members of the OLG's Winner's Circle Reward program will be invited to preview and play the site as part of a phased-in approach, Bitoni said.

Players will have to register to verify their identity and age, and payments will be made through credit cards.

Online gamblers can set limits on their gaming, including how much they're prepared to lose with a seven day "cooling off" period before that amount can be increased.

Problem gamblers will be given the option to exclude themselves from playing the online games.

Niagara Casinos spokesman Greg Medulun said the company, which operates Fallsview Casino and Casino Niagara on behalf of OLG, will keep a "close eye" on the launch of the site.

"It remains to be seen what impact will be felt on our business as we don't know the full nature, extent and timing of OLG's online-gaming program," he said.

Medulun said Niagara Casinos has 4,500 slot machines and 170 table games.

"As part of our slot mix, we have electronic roulette."

The OLG estimates 500,000 Ontario residents spend \$400 million to \$500 million a year on unregulated out-of-province Internet gambling, said Bitoni.

"And what we're offering is a controlled, trust-

worthy alternative to these grey market sites," he said. "When we did our market research, trust was one of the big things that people told us about, that they really wanted in these sites."

Gates said he has several concerns about the online site.

"What will the social costs? What will this do to border towns like Niagara Falls and Windsor that have casinos? This is more competition."

OLG is in the middle of an ongoing modernization process and online gaming has been a goal for several years as traditional casinos face falling profits.

British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec and all the Atlantic provinces already provide regulated Internet gaming.

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— with files from QMI Agency

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **MUSIC:** Singer keeps promise to her late son

Carrey croons for Niagara talent showcase



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Niagara's Rita Carrey, sister of Jim Carrey, helps launch a new talent showcase at The Kasbah in Niagara Falls Nov. 27.

sing for a living," I said. "When to make that promise come true?" Then he booked us into a club when he was 18 so I had

john.law@sunmedia.ca

JOHN LAW
QMI Agency Niagara

She has been through poverty and tragedy, but when you're Jim Carrey's sister, there's also lots of comedy.

Niagara singer Rita Carrey shares her story in the upcoming book *Growing Up Carrey*, and she's giving snippets of it on-stage. Tonight she brings her new one-woman show to The Kasbah in Niagara Falls as part of a talent showcase series benefitting local charities.

"I'm gonna do some jazz songs, big band era songs, pop songs, but I'll tell you why I'm doing that based on things that happened in my life," says Carrey, who just released her first Christmas album, *Around Each Christmas Tree*.

Started by local musician Wayne Malton, the show-

case series will spotlight different Niagara talent each week. Admission is free, but tonight's show will accept donations for Dreams Take Flight, a charity which enables him both physically, socially and mentally challenged children to have the trip of a lifetime. It was started by Air Canada employees in 1989.

Carrey will be joined by local artists Paige Kopp, Doug Littlewood, Emily Yochim, Sarah Boulton and Steve Kostyk.

Carrey has been active in Niagara's music scene for years, but has recently taken her show to Toronto where it went over "great."

The connection to her famous brother is what captures attention, but audiences are often surprised at what

she delivers on stage.

"You've got to get over that and go with the flow," she says of her superstar sibling and people's assumptions. "They judge (me) because of him both positively and negatively."

"But I don't care. I'm doing what makes me happy, what I enjoy doing, and people seem to like it."

Carrey was an on-air personality at Welland radio station 91.7 Giant FM for 10 years before being let go in 2012. She's now general manager for the Christmas in Niagara Falls store at Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort.

Growing up a Carrey wasn't what people expect, she says. Before her brother became a star on *In Living Color* in the early '90s, the Newmarket-based Carrey family went

through years of poverty and hardships. After her father lost his job, the family was forced to live in a van.

"When (Jim) was younger, he was just one of us," she says. "(We) worked in a factory, altogether, not finishing high school because we worked all night long."

"Most people think, 'Oh, I could never get into entertainment because I don't know anybody,' either in music, arts or whatever. Well, Jim didn't know anybody either. He had to find a way to make it happen."

His sister chose a different path after having kids, but when her oldest son Marty died in an auto accident in 2005, she decided to follow some advice he gave her when he was four years old.

"He said, 'Mom, you should



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■ **MUSIC:** Christmas with the First Lady of Guitar

Liona Boyd comes here for the music

JOHN LAW
QMI Agency Niagara

For an artist who makes such serene music, Liona Boyd's Christmas was being anything but calm.

Constant moving. A career-threatening condition. Choosing between a husband or her music. There was also that eight-year relationship with former prime minister Pierre Trudeau. Being Canada's First Lady of the Guitar comes with some drama.

On the line from Toronto, the 65-year-old performer says the ride has been bumpy but she'd like at times, but returning to Canada after married life in California has rejuvenated her.

"Basically, I was thinking that I would live forever happily in Beverly Hills with my wonderful husband, but he was kind of jealous of the guitar," she says. "He wanted me to give up the guitar and I just didn't want to."

"I had a lot of music in me, a lot more to give. I've done four records since I left, so it's really good that I did. Sometimes one chapter closes and another opens."

Since moving back to Toronto in 2011, Boyd has resumed her intimate concerts throughout Canada, including this Friday at Silver Spire United Church in St. Catharines. The venues may be smaller than during the height of her popularity in the 1980s and early 1990s, but Boyd says she savours every moment — "I pinch myself every time I get on stage."

Mainly because it was all nearly taken away in 2003.

Unable to control one finger in her right hand, Boyd was diagnosed with Musician's Focal Dystonia, in which muscles contract from repetition. She was told it was irreversible, and Boyd figured her career was over. But as she examined the way she played, she realized it was an ailment born of bad habits. Musical virtuosos, she discovered, will absorb both the good and bad to perform.

"In my case, I practised more and more, reinforcing the bad motion," she says. "Now there's all this research and knowledge, and hopefully a lot of musicians can prevent getting this."

Boyd didn't perform for six years.



LIONA BOYD

IF YOU GO

WHO: Liona Boyd
WHERE: Silver Spire United Church, 366 St. Paul St., St. Catharines

WHEN: Friday, 7 p.m.
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When she returned, she had adopted a whole new style.

"I realized I could retrain. The brain is very plastic and trainable. If you spend the time, the neuro receptors regenerate in a different way."

A Liona Boyd concert is now much different than one 20 years ago — less concertos, more diversity, and certainly more singing, as heard on her newest album, *A Winter Fantasy*.

"I never had faith that I could sing," she says. "I was the kid that used to lip sync Happy Birthday."

It's her third Christmas album, returning to the genre that earned her a legion of fans with her classic 1981 album, *A Guitar for Christmas*. Her label at the time had such little faith in it, she paid half the budget to make it.

"But it went platinum," she says. "People still come up after concerts with the old LP and want me to sign it."

A *Winter Fantasy* combines traditional Christmas melodies with her own compositions, making for Boyd's most spiritual work yet. She was thrilled when a fan described it as "transcendent" after one show.

Christmas is special in other ways for the Boyd — it prompted her to first start performing as a young girl in London, England.

"My very early concerts were me playing the recorder and melodic, going Christmas carolling around the neighbourhoods in both England and Canada," she says. "I would fundraise for the humane society."

Her concerts have been downsized in another way: the ticket price.

"I specifically asked the promoter on this tour to make the tickets really low," she says. "I know at Christmas time people get a bit stretched, I know St. Catharines is not the most prosperous right now."

"One thing that changed my life was going to a concert when I was 13, so I really encourage parents to bring their kids. One concert can change their life."

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